



PRESS RELEASE

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Land Reform in Afghanistan Will Make Beneficial Changes

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN | OCTOBER 25, 2011 — Afghans are one step closer to enjoying officially recognized, legally enforceable property rights that will support long-term investment in residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural real estate required for robust economic growth. Approximately 120 representatives involved in land management met today to propose revisions and amendments of Afghanistan's Land Management Law. Supported by USAID, the meeting provided an opportunity for participants from the private and public sectors, civil-society, non-governmental organizations, donors and development projects to strengthen and improve the amendment process of the law and work toward its passage by Parliament.

Assurance of property rights, particularly secure land tenure, is fundamental to achieving stabilization in Afghanistan, and is a necessary element of economic growth, poverty reduction, and job creation. Formalized and legally enforceable property rights build confidence in the government's legitimacy and effectiveness in meeting the population's needs.

Speaking at the event, USAID Deputy Mission Director Jed Barton emphasized the importance of a streamlined and transparent land sector. "Implementation of a standard legal and administrative framework for land management has a significant impact on private-sector investment, economic growth, and quality of life."

After decades of conflict, Afghanistan's land management system became difficult to navigate for potential investors and the public. In September 2010, the Ministry of Agriculture established Arazi, the Afghanistan Land Authority, as an institution within the Ministry of Agriculture to facilitate leasing government-held land to the private-sector to promote investment for businesses who lease land for agricultural, agro-processing, and industrial purposes.

Also addressing the audience, Minister H.E. Mohammad Asif Rahimi stated, "Amendment of land law will reduce land conflicts, discourage land usurpation, improve access to the government lands, strengthen private sector investment, and improve the overall legal framework for land management, and ownership."

Arazi will consolidate the recommendations for changes to the Land Management Law and continue to shepherd the legislation to Parliament.

Through its Land Reform in Afghanistan project, USAID is helping to develop a robust, enduring, and Afghan-owned and managed land market framework that encourages investment and productive growth and mitigates land-based conflict. # # #

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